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# A Method of Teaching English Spelling to Thai Students at the Elementary Level

Sirima Warayingyong  
*Central Washington University*

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A METHOD OF TEACHING ENGLISH SPELLING  
TO THAI STUDENTS AT THE  
ELEMENTARY LEVEL

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A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Graduate Faculty  
Central Washington State College

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Education

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by  
Sirima Warayingyong  
March, 1969

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D. W. Cummings, COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

---

John E. Davis

---

John Herum

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## CHAPTER I

### ON TEACHING ENGLISH TO THE THAI STUDENTS

Correct spelling is necessary in everyday life.

People communicate not only by speaking but also by writing. A piece of writing without spelling errors is preferable to one with errors. Correct spelling helps the reader to understand the ideas in a passage. But perhaps more importantly, incorrect spelling gives a reader a bad impression of the writer. Therefore, correct spelling is very important in writing.

Children should form the habit of correct spelling early. An early concern with correct spelling helps reduce spelling mistakes and at the same time helps the student accumulate a large supply of correctly spelled words. On the other hand, if spelling mistakes are overlooked, the incorrect spelling will increase and become a large number when the student is in the higher grades. That is very dangerous. It will cause the student frustration and insecurity when he writes. Students who spell poorly very often do not attempt to use words whose spellings they are not sure of which weakens their total writing skill. An early concern with correct spelling is important too because once a student



"learns" to misspell a word, it is harder to teach him to learn to spell it correctly.

Before a Thai teacher attempts to teach English spelling to her students, she should consider the factors that complicate English spelling for the Thai student, so that she can provide effective lessons, methods of instruction, and teaching materials. Good spelling involves many areas of the language: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and handwriting. Thai students learn English as a foreign language, and their teacher of English spelling should be aware of the following factors:

1. the difficulties of English spelling in general;
2. spelling problems that arise from the differences between the Thai and the English languages;
3. the Thai student's background in English--in the case of the present discussion, at grades 5, 6, and 7; and
4. the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching methods most commonly used today in Thailand.

#### I. THE DIFFICULTY OF ENGLISH SPELLING IN GENERAL

The teacher should be aware that English spelling is notoriously inconsistent. Charles C. Fries mentions that

English . . . is very badly spelled. In English the same symbol or letter stands for a number of distinctly different sounds as, for example, the letter i in bite,

bit, machine, or the letters ea in beat, breath, heart, earth . . . (15:11)

The teacher should be aware that an English letter stands for more than one English sound. The letter c represents /s/ in city and /k/ in car. The five vowel letters (a, e, i, o, u) represent fourteen distinctive vowel sounds (7:1). Also one sound may be represented by many different letters: me, bee, sea, key for one vowel sound and phone, fine, laugh for one consonant sound. The inconsistencies of English spelling will cause the student trouble. The teacher should provide instruction that helps make the spelling lesson more simple and more efficient.

## II. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THAI AND ENGLISH

The Thai student learns English after he has mastered his own sound system, so he tends to substitute the closest sounds in the Thai sound system for English sounds that do not exist in Thai. This situation is unavoidable with students beginning English because their own sound system is more ingrained than the new one. The mistakes that arise from these sound-substitutions are not due to "laziness" or "inattention"; nor are they done on purpose, but they are due to the predominant habits of the student's native language.

These habitual responses can be reduced, in time, by providing enough patterned practice based on an understanding

of the articulation of the new sounds (for pronunciation) and of word and sentence-formation (for grammatical structure). A linguistic analysis will demonstrate that the "mistakes" or mispronunciation from sound-substitution are not random but systematic or patterned. For example, Thai does not have /v/ but has /w/ and /f/, which are the closest sounds, in terms of articulation, to /v/. Therefore Thai people will substitute either /w/ or /f/ for /v/. They substitute /w/ for /v/ in initial position and /f/ for /v/ in final position. They do not substitute /p/ or /b/ because they are not the closest sounds to /w/ or /v/.

Some sound-substitutions will not cause any problem in communication, although they will sound foreign to a native speaker: for example, a Thai student or teacher might substitute a /d/ for /ð/ in the word the, which is imprecise, but can still be understood. However, there are instances where substitutions that can cause misunderstanding because the sound substituted can be confused with another sound which is not intended. For example, in a spelling lesson a Thai teacher might unconsciously substitute a /d/ for a /ð/ in the word then; the students are apt to write what they hear, unaware that a mistake in pronunciation has occurred, and record the word as den. The student's efforts are apt to be considered a spelling error, though the source of the error lies elsewhere.

The following are a few of the spelling problems caused by mispronunciation due to sound-substitutions.

In the Thai sound system, sounds in final position, especially final stops, are not released. Thus the Thai speaker will often pronounce the words wide and white both as /wai/. This kind of pronunciation can cause problems, especially when the teacher is dictating a spelling lesson, because the student cannot be sure which of the two words is wanted.

Because /z/ does not occur at all in Thai and /s/ does not occur in final position, the Thai speaker of English tends to replace /z/ with unreleased /d/ or /t/ because they are the closest Thai sounds most like /z/, and to do the same, though less commonly, with final /s/. Thus the Thai speaker will often pronounce size as side or sight and face as fade, fed or fate.

Thai speakers tend to substitute final /n/ for final /l/ in some words. Thus, stole will be pronounced as stone, bowl as bone. Final nasals cause another kind of problem in spelling. Although the sounds /m,n,ŋ/ exist in Thai, they do not occur in final position. Thus, such words as mind and mine are apt to sound like my.

Although /l/ and /r/ exist in the Thai sound system, a Thai speaker will interchange /l/ and /r/ if he is not careful. Both sounds cause inaccurate pronunciation even in

Thai. Thai people bring with them this habit when they learn English. As a result raw and grew are commonly mispronounced as law and glue.

The illustrations above make it clear that the differences between the sound systems of the two languages can cause problems in pronunciation that can interfere with the teaching and learning of spelling. The spelling problems caused by sound-substitutions will be discussed in more detail in Chapter V.

Just as the differences between the English and Thai sound systems can cause problems in teaching and learning of English spelling, so too can the differences between the grammatical structures of the two languages. In regard to grammatical structure, English is an inflected language while Thai is not. Thai speakers will say two boy in place of two boys, he call me in place of he called me or he calls me. As a result, inflectional endings can cause serious problems for the Thai student of English. Especially when he writes English independently, the habits of his own language are dominant. When he is spelling to dictation, as in a spelling test, and the pronunciation is controlled, the student will hear the sound of the inflectional ending from the teacher before he spells. In dictation exercises misspellings due to inflection problems should not occur--unless, of course, the teacher's English pronunciation is very poor. Thus there are

two important things for the teacher to remember. First, she must be very careful to pronounce the inflectional ending when she is dictating to her students; second, she must impress upon her students the problems of inflection when they are composing in English by themselves.

In general, whether the problem is one of inflections or the more general problem of sound-substitutions, the difficulty for the student can be lessened if the teacher masters correct pronunciation. The Thai teacher of English spelling needs to be especially aware of those differences between the Thai and English sound systems that can produce spelling problems for her students. The problems presented by some of the sound-substitutions are so pervasive and so apt to cause misunderstanding that beyond taking care with her pronunciation, a Thai teacher must use special techniques to overcome any problems produced by sound-substitutions that she might make without realizing that she is making them. For instance, for trouble words such as wine and vine, she should put the word into a sentence that provides a context that makes it clear which word is intended. She should also warn her students to make use of the context to avoid confusion from sound-substitutions.

### III. THE THAI STUDENT'S BACKGROUND IN ENGLISH

Thai students usually start English at grade 5 and go on until college. Before grade 5 the children have very little

experience with English. They might be taught to read and write the English alphabet and to read and write simple words such as cat, dog, boy, man, woman. They learn some simple questions and answers, like "What is your name?" "How many brothers and sisters do you have?" They are taught to remember the meaning and the spelling of these simple words. But grammatical structures and pronunciation are not really introduced until grade 5. Therefore, Thai students at grade 5 have very little background in English, and in some parts of the country where there are few teachers of English, the students do not have any English experience at all until they reach grade 5.

When teaching English spelling at this level, the teacher should check to make sure that the children can write the English alphabet, both in lower case and capital letters, and can pronounce the most common sounds of each of the twenty-six letters. (See appendix) Being able to pronounce and to write the English alphabet is essential to learning English spelling. Proper spelling requires a student to pronounce a word and match the sound with written letters. The ability to identify the sounds with letters and to pronounce accurately are fundamental to teaching and learning spelling.

#### IV. WEAKNESSES OF THE TRADITIONAL METHODS OF TEACHING SPELLING

At present the program of teaching English in Thailand emphasizes mainly three areas: pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. Spelling seems to be less important in the lesson plan and is dealt with only as a by-product when a new vocabulary word is introduced. As a result, the student does not pay much systematic attention to spelling. Usually the teacher will correct written exercises and the student will correct his spelling mistakes by copying the correct forms several times. This copying can give the student the impression that he is being punished. Spelling exercises can and should be given so as to give the student a feeling of achievement if he is taught to study in a systematic way.

Spelling tests are usually provided through dictation drills in which the student spells words or sentences read to him by the teacher. Such drills only test the student's ability to associate sound with letters, or sounds with words. But spelling lessons should serve more skills; they should help provide the student with the various skills needed to spell correctly when he is composing independently and not to dictation. Such spelling lessons should include systematic treatment of word analysis, some practical generalizations or "rules", and written and oral exercises that reinforce the student's spelling ability.



The following chapters provide practical methods for teaching English spelling to Thai students who learn English as a foreign language. The teaching method is designed especially for Thai students but is partly applicable for other students who have the same sort of problems with English spelling.

## CHAPTER II

### A GENERAL METHOD FOR TEACHING SPELLING

There are various procedures for learning to spell. A method that is very effective for one group may not be for other groups whose backgrounds in English are different. The method of teaching English spelling to Thai students will be in some way different from that for teaching native speakers of English. For instance, when a Thai student learns English, he cannot pronounce, or even hear, the words as readily as do native speakers. He needs more practice speaking and listening to the sounds of English words at the beginning of the lesson. The method I suggest for teaching English spelling to Thai students consists of the teacher having the student:

- Step 1: Hear the word.
- Step 2: See the word.
- Step 3: Say the word.
- Step 4: Write the word.
- Step 5: Practice the word.

#### Steps 1 and 2: Hear the Word and See the Word

These steps should be performed together both to save time and to make spelling easier. Thai students at this level usually have a problem hearing and producing English words they hear the first time. They cannot respond immediately as they

do in their own language. For example, the utterance of /ItsizI/ ("It's easy"), which is such a simple thing to understand for the native speaker of English, might sound to the Thai student like some long new word that has many s sounds in it.

This difficulty in catching the word for the first time can be somewhat overcome by having the student hear the word correctly pronounced and see it correctly spelled at the very beginning so that he can better associate its sound with its shape. As Gertrude Hildreth says in her book Teaching Spelling, "The safe rule is: emphasize visual imagery as well as sound if you want pupils to spell correctly and to learn readily . . . (22:37)". Although she is referring to pupils who are native speakers of English, her point is even more applicable to students for whom English is a foreign language. The student should see the word correctly written so that he can associate the sound of the word with its visual shape. The visual shape of the word will help him remember its spelling.

In addition to using a word card to show a word to her students, the teacher should show the student how to write it. The student can remember the spelling better if he watches the teacher write the word on the blackboard. Mildred Dawson mentions that, "Watching the teacher's movement in writing the word is more effective in learning how to spell it than

merely looking at a word that is already written (10)."

Therefore, the teacher's handwriting, whether in manuscript or cursive form, should be legible, clear, and correct so that it can serve as a good model.

It is very important, too, that the teacher act as a model of pronunciation. She needs to prepare herself to pronounce a new English word as accurately as possible so that the student can hear and practice the correct sound from the very beginning of his experience with the word. Arthur I. Gates mentions in his book The Psychology of Reading and Spelling that, "Careful articulation of the word is of great importance. Investigations show a constant tendency to spell a word as it is pronounced: 'git' for 'get', 'orfice' for 'office'----etc. (17:80)." Therefore, to reduce spelling errors, the teacher should try to avoid sound-substitutions, especially those that can cause serious spelling errors. The teacher should keep in mind, too, that proper pronunciation is more than the correct sounds of the word; it is also correct accent and pitch.

Since spelling depends so much on correct pronunciation, before each spelling class the teacher should check the pronunciation of the words and the sentences to be presented in her spelling lesson. She should ask a native speaker of English, if possible, or she should consult a reliable English dictionary. She should practice the word by herself so that she can be a good model of English pronunciation.

After the student has heard and seen the whole word, the teacher should spell out the individual parts of the word--its syllables and its letters. If the word has more than one syllable, the teacher should apply syllabication as an aid for her students. Syllabication can be helpful in spelling when the word looks long, confusing, and discouraging. When the word has more than one syllable and the student has difficulty remembering its spelling, the teacher can help him by using simple syllabic division to show him that the word is only two or more parts, or syllables, put together:

<u>summer</u>	is	"sum-mer"
<u>September</u>	is	"Sep-tem-ber"
<u>America</u>	is	"A-mer-i-ca"
<u>Thailand</u>	is	"Thai-land"
<u>classroom</u>	is	"class-room"
<u>father</u>	is	"fa-ther"
<u>Sunday</u>	is	"Sun-day"

The teacher must be careful to divide the word at the right place. If she makes her division incorrectly, the syllabication can actually increase the student's difficulty. The following are basic principles of syllabication that can help the teacher quickly divide words of two or more syllables:

1. A syllable has only one vowel sound--pan, clock, and bank. It might contain two or more vowel letters, but only one vowel sound--book, pane, seat, and walked.
2. If there are two consonants between two vowels, each syllable usually takes one of the consonants--un-der, Mon-day, and let-ter.

3. If there is one consonant between two vowels, the second syllable usually takes the consonant: a-go, wa-ter, be-gin, and ba-by. Under this generalization, there are two exceptions.

a. Some English vowels are called "long" sounds.

The long sounds are the sounds of vowel combinations; for instance, ee in feed, ea in mean, a-e in take and pane, and the vowel letter at the end of the word: go, me, by.

Some English vowels are called "short" sounds.

They are:

The short sound of a in man, cap, bag.  
 The short sound of e in men, pet, send.  
 The short sound of i in big, pin, sit.  
 The short sound of o in job, stop, from.  
 The short sound of u in bus, jump.

The consonant may go with the first vowel if it has a short sound and is in the accented syllable: cit-y, pal-ace.

b. The consonant may go with the first vowel if the consonant is an x: boxes, max-i-mum.

4. If a word ends in "le" and a consonant precedes the "l", the consonant usually begins the last syllable: ta-ble, peo-ple, and noo-dle. There is one exception here. In any word in which the "le" ending is preceded by a consonant digraph, the "le" is a separate syllable: pick-le.

5. When two consonant letters represent a single sound that is different from the sounds represented by the separate letters, the letters make a digraph: ch, sh. When two vowel letters represent a single sound that is different from the sounds represented by the separate letters, the letters make a diphthong: ou, oy. When two consonant sounds blend into a single sound they make a blend: bl, tr. When two vowel sounds blend into a single sound, they make a glide: ei, a-e (ate). Consonant and vowel digraphs, diphthongs, blends, and glides are usually not separated by syllabic breaks:

[el-e-phant	(ph = consonant digraph)
A-pril	(pr = consonant blend)
chick-en	(ck = consonant digraph)
ma-chine	(ch = consonant digraph)
clean	(ea = vowel digraph) no syllabic break]

6. Prefixes and derivational suffixes are usually separate syllables: re-turn, hap-pi-ness. The inflectional suffixes are a special problem and are discussed in Chapter III.

English syllabication is very complicated, and the principles given above are only approximate. When in doubt, the teacher should always check a reliable English dictionary for the syllabication of a word.

When two or more letters represent one sound within a syllable, the letter should be sounded out as a unit. For

instance, the letters ea in clean should be sounded out together. The teacher should not pause in between e and a. If she pauses at all, it should be between cl and ean. This method helps the student to see the common feature of ea for the /i/ sound, and helps him form a generalization by himself when he sees the same ea in later words such as beat, seat, neat.

In general, the student will better remember how to spell a word if he can identify in it some feature common to a group of words. Such common features should be pointed out to him whenever the class situation allows. For example, the teacher can mention that the vowel-letter combination ee in the words tree or street is the same sound as that in the words see, bee, free and so on. The student can thus form his own general conclusion that the English letters ee are like เ in Thai. When he later comes across ee in feet or needle, he will feel a sense of general pattern and simplicity. Of course, the student should be warned that English spelling is so inconsistent that there are always exceptions to any generalization. But still, such generalizations can help the student learn English spelling.

How the words are divided is important. Digraphs, diphthongs, blends, and glides should not be separated. If the students or teacher pause, the pause should correspond to phonetic realities. Thus, teach could be divided t-ea-ch with



a pause t-ea/-ch, but not te-/ach. Similarly:

gr-ee-n or gr-/ee-n, but not g-r-e-/e-n  
f-ir-st or f-ir/-st, but not f-i-/r-st  
st-ay-ed or st-ay/-ed, but not s-t-ay/ed

Seeing and hearing a word pronounced and spelled correctly are very important to learning to spell it, but if the student knows the meaning of a word, he will remember its spelling easier and longer than if he just hears and sees it spelled. As Arthur I. Gates says in his book The Psychology of Reading and Spelling, "The pupil should know the meaning of the word he is learning to spell (17:81)." Homer Reed agrees in his book Psychology of Elementary School Subjects: "Children learned spelling better in connection with meaning than when meaning was ignored (40:251-252)."

This is especially practical for a student of a foreign language. If he can associate a word with some meaning, he will remember it better than he will if it remains only a meaningless sound to him. Associating a word with its meaning is one way to make memorization simpler and longer lasting. Picture cards or even the real object or action to which the word refers can be used as teaching aids to illustrate the meaning of the word the student is learning to spell.

In the process of having the student hear and see the word, the teacher has to be well equipped with correct pronunciation, proper syllabication, a clear understanding of the

word's meaning, and handwriting that is clear and legible. Teaching spelling requires several different skills of the teacher.

### Step 3: Say the Word

After the student has associated the sound of the word with its visual shape and its meaning, the teacher should have him say the word aloud after her. He should also present the syllables that make up the word and the letters that spell the word. The teacher should be careful to make sure that the student can sound out correctly the letters as well as the word's total pronunciation, accent and intonation. In class the production can be done chorally, individually or in small groups.

This step--saying the word--might at first seem to be unimportant, but this step is necessary in order to relate hearing and seeing the word (Steps 1 and 2) with writing it (step 4). If the student can say the word correctly, he will be better able to write it correctly.

### Step 4: Write the Word

After the student hears the word, sees the word and says the word, the teacher should have him write the word by copying it from the board. Copying the word correctly will help the student fix the image of the word more firmly in his mind. No matter by what method he is taught to spell, he

should be given a chance to write the word starting with copying it, checking it, practicing writing it, and hopefully even using it in different situations in order to increase his mastery of it.

After the student copies the word, the teacher must check whether he has copied it correctly. Spelling errors might possibly occur because of the student's careless observation of the letters that form the word or even because of his poor writing, which is often taken to be incorrect spelling. The teacher should check the student's handwriting in regard to right proportion of size, spacing and legibility. It is a good idea if she can display a chart of English manuscript or cursive handwriting (see appendix) in the English class so that the student can check his handwriting against a reliable model at any time.

It is necessary that the teacher of spelling have correct handwriting. The student usually watches the teacher write on the board and copies the way the teacher writes. Therefore anything presented on the board should be a good model for the student. The teacher should be especially conscious of such differences as those between a and o, or f and h, for these differences can cause spelling problems for the student.

A small writing hint might be provided in any spelling lesson when the class needs it. The following are some hints

that can be added in a spelling class when the students produce illegible handwriting that leads to spelling errors. The teacher has to remember that she should not let this handwriting hint take up all the time of the spelling lesson. She should only convince the student that poor handwriting can cause spelling errors and she should point out clearly the special problem areas as shown on the chart on page 22.

The teacher should encourage the student to proofread any word or passage he writes in order to catch any misspelling that might have occurred unintentionally. Proofreading can help reduce spelling errors.

#### Step 5: Practice Writing the Word in Order to Master Spelling Skill

After having the student copy the word correctly, the teacher should have him master its spelling through various kinds of practice and exercise. When a student makes an error in his spelling exercises the teacher should call it to his attention as soon as possible and give him a chance to correct himself. But she should be gentle. She should remember that nearly always the mistakes that the student makes when he misspells a word are less than the number of things he has done right. For instance, if a student spells candle c-a-n-d-e-l, he has heard the word correctly, he has spelled something that sounds like candle, he has all of the

PROBLEM AREAS IN HANDWRITING  
WHICH CAUSE SPELLING ERRORS

1. Make <u>a</u> come to the base line, then end up . . .	to avoid confusion with <u>o</u> .
2. Close small <u>o</u> at the top . . .	to avoid confusion with <u>u</u> , <u>v</u> , or <u>a</u> .
3. Make the top of <u>n</u> round . .	to avoid confusion with <u>u</u> .
4. Make the top of <u>u</u> pointed . . .	to avoid confusion with <u>n</u> .
5. Watch <u>i</u> , <u>e</u> , and <u>c</u> ; dot <u>i</u> , keep <u>e</u> open and give <u>e</u> a head . . .	to avoid confusion among <u>i</u> , <u>e</u> , and <u>c</u> .
6. Close the first part of <u>a</u> , <u>d</u> , and <u>g</u> . . .	to avoid confusion with <u>u</u> , <u>ei</u> , <u>el</u> , and <u>y</u> .
7. Cross <u>t</u> after you write the word . . .	to avoid confusion with <u>l</u> .
8. Watch the size of <u>e</u> and <u>l</u> . . .	to avoid confusing one with the other.
9. In writing <u>f</u> , close the letter at the base line . . .	to avoid confusion with <u>b</u> .
10. Finish <u>b</u> and <u>w</u> before adding a letter . . .	to avoid confusion with <u>be</u> and <u>ve</u> .

correct letters, and he has four of them in exactly the right place. The only thing he has done wrong has been to reverse the order of the final two letters--a small error in comparison with all that he has done correctly. The teacher should encourage him for what he has done right as well as pointing out to him what he has done wrong, and requiring him to practice until he gets it all right. The following are some exercises that can be effective in mastering spelling skill:

1. Completion exercises
2. Dictation exercises
3. Games

Completion exercises. Completion exercises can be prepared to develop all the language skills--vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation--that are needed in learning to spell. Examples:

1. Fill in the missing letters to complete the idea in the context, one letter for each blank:

- a. H \_ re is your pencil.
- b. Did you read my b \_ \_ k?

This kind of completion exercise is a very simple spelling practice, for the student identifies only one or two letters in a word at a time.

2. Fill in the blank to spell a word that completes the idea in the context:

- a. 1) The opposite of \_ \_ \_ is small.  
 2) The opposite of \_ \_ \_ \_ is difficult.
- b. 1) Food you have in the morning is  
 2) The first month of the year is  
 \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ .

This kind of completion exercise is more difficult than type 1. The first letter of each word could be supplied to make the exercise easier. This exercise is very good vocabulary drill as well as good spelling drill. Also the meaning of the words synonym and antonym can be introduced here.

3. Find more words that sound like and are spelled like the given word:

- a. be = (he, me, she . . .)
- b. book = (cook, took . . .)
- c. go = (no, so . . .)

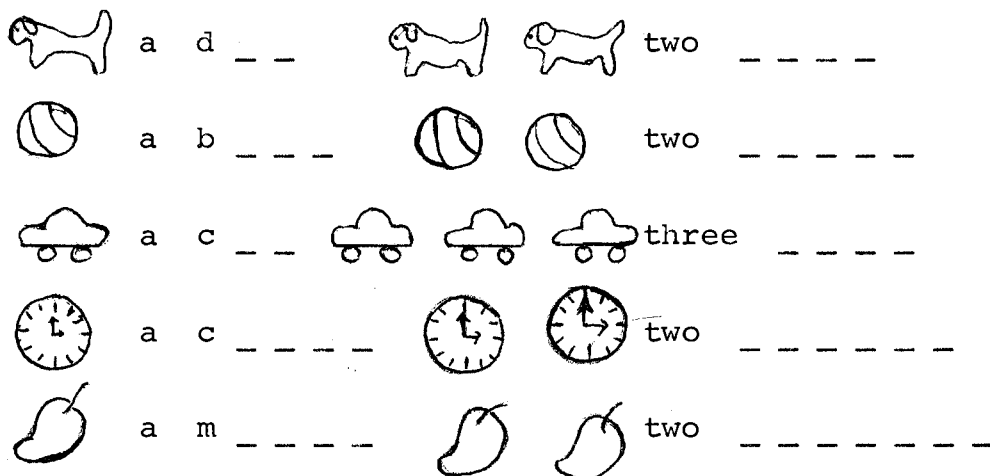
The meaning of the word rhyme can be introduced here so that the teacher can use it again in later spelling exercises. This exercise helps student associate English letters with English sounds.

4. Fill in the blank with the word suitable in the sentence:

- a. Monday is one day of the week. There are seven \_ \_ \_ \_ in a week.
- b. I eat breakfast at 7:00 o'clock. Bob \_ \_ \_ \_ his breakfast at 7:30.

This exercise helps the student master English inflectional endings.

5. Identify the picture with a word:



Dictation exercises. Dictation exercises can be used to help the student practice listening and to help him improve his comprehension of English. Dictation improves the student's ability to associate sounds and letters in a single word or in a context.

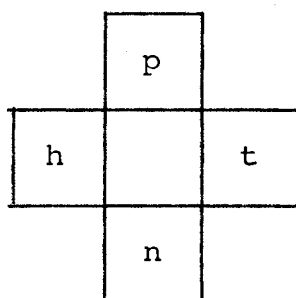
To prepare a dictation exercise, the teacher can pick out some passages in the textbook that cover the words the student has already studied, or the teacher can make up one passage suitable for the class situation. The passage should be about 50 words long. The exercise can be either in a form of an independent sentence or an entire passage.

Games. Games, including crossword puzzles and card games, can help the student master his vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation skills, and thus can help him improve his spelling of English. Gertrude Hildreth mentions that "Crossword puzzles are recommended for spelling practice not only

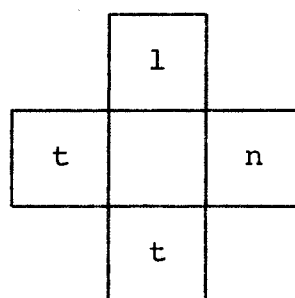


because they are universally enjoyed but because they give practice in writing the words and reacting to word meanings (22:260)." Crossword puzzles can help make spelling lessons fun. But they are difficult enough that they should be prepared for the student only after he has enough mastery of spelling so that he can work the puzzle without becoming too discouraged. The teacher can prepare puzzles that range from very simple to more complicated ones. For example:

1. Here is a vowel game for you to play. Copy each puzzle. Write a vowel letter in each blank in each puzzle to spell two of your new words.

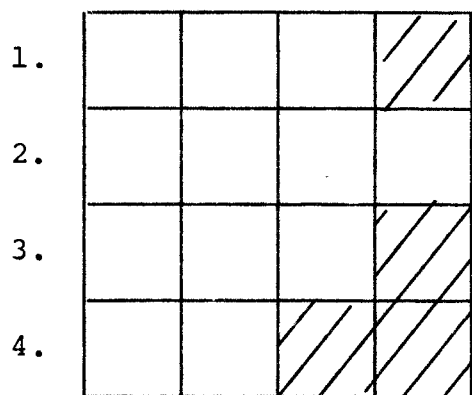


(Key: hat, hit, or hut;  
pan, pin, or pun)



(Key: ten or ton;  
let or lot)

2. Here is a word game for you to play. Fill in the blanks to spell the words:



1. You cut wood with it. (Key: 1. axe  
2. eyes  
3. pen  
4. no)  
2. You see with them.  
3. You write with it.  
4. It means the opposite of yes.

3. Here is a word game for you. Fill in the blanks to spell the words:

1.	T		E		H
2.		A		D	
3.	S		O		
4.		L		C	
5.	G		A		S

1. You chew your food with them. (Key: 1. teeth  
2. hands  
3. shoes  
4. clock  
5. glass)  
2. You have them at the ends of your arms.  
3. You wear them on your feet.  
4. It tells you what time it is.  
5. You drink water from it.

4. Here is a word game for you. Fill in the blanks to spell the words, and you will find a word in the colored squares.

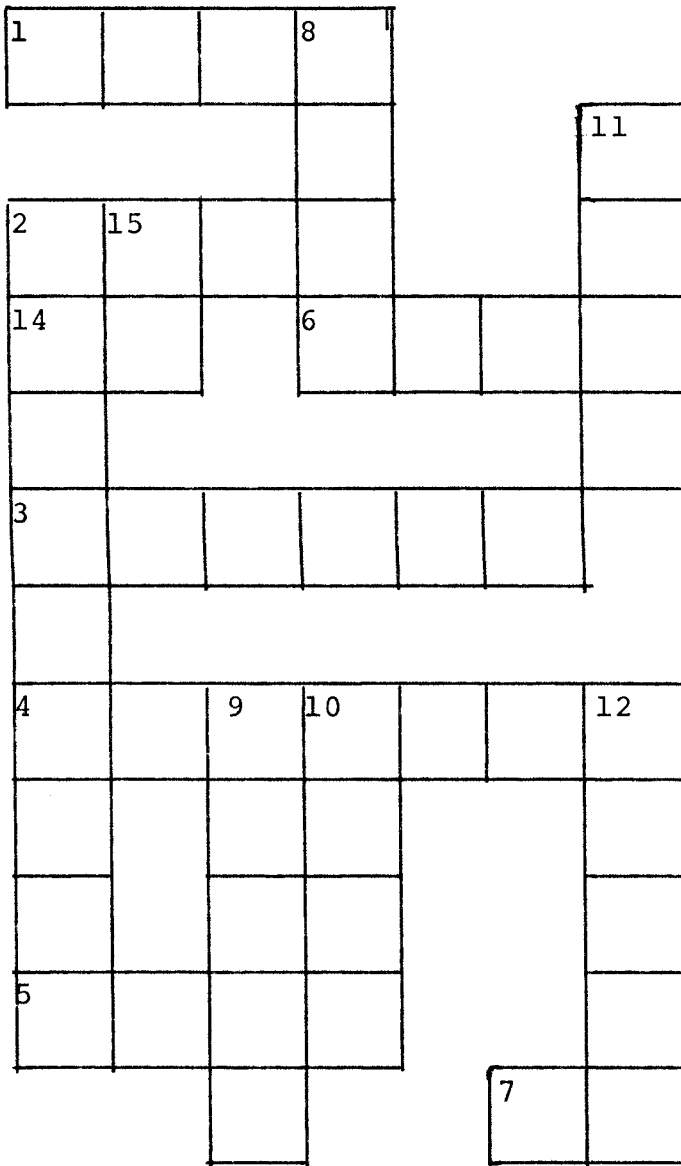
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			

- |                               |              |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. It is fun to chew.         | (Key: 1. gum |
| 2. It is frozen water.        | 2. ice       |
| 3. Quicker than <u>walk</u> . | 3. run       |
| 4. Opposite of <u>truth</u> . | 4. lie)      |

(Word in the colored squares: girl)

5. Here is a crossword puzzle for you to work.

(See page 29.)



KEY:

ACROSS

1. days
2. city
3. noodle
4. replies
5. says
6. stay
7. my
14. on

DOWN

2. countries
8. says
9. plays
10. lies
11. toy
12. study
15. in

ACROSS

1. There are seven \_\_\_\_ in a week.
2. Bangkok is one.
3. Chinese food.
4. The same meaning as answers.
5. The same meaning as speaks.
6. The same meaning as live.
7. "That is \_\_\_\_ hat, not yours."
14. Opposite of under.

DOWN

2. They are bigger than cities.
8. The same meaning as speaks.
9. "The boy \_\_\_\_ ball."
10. Opposite of truths.
11. A doll is also a \_\_\_\_.
12. The same meaning as learn.
15. Opposite of out.

Card games. The following are some card games which may be used.

1. Pick-a-Card Game:

Words requiring practice are written on cards, and the cards are placed blank side out on the blackboard ledge. A child chooses a card at random; the teacher looks at the card and pronounces the word. If the child can spell it, he keeps the card; if not, someone else has a chance. The winner is the one who gets the most cards.

2. Make-a-Word Game:

A word, usually a long word, is given to the class. The students make as many meaningful words as they can by picking out any letters in that word.

Example:

THAILAND

land  
hand  
in  
hat  
than  
etc.

3. Pyramid Games:

Begin with one letter. Add a letter to make a two-letter word. Add another letter to make a three-letter word. See how long a word you can make. Example:

a	i
at	it
eat	sit
feat	site
feast	spite
etc.	etc.

Pantomime or Charades. Pantomime or Charades can be used as games for spelling reviews. One student pantomimes a meaning without saying a word. The teacher then asks the others what the pantomiming student is doing or did do. The student responds in full sentences: "He is walking" or "She wrote." They then spell the verb. The game can be useful for vocabulary as well as spelling review.

Completion Exercises	letters in a word spelling of the whole word rhyming noun-inflections synonyms, antonyms homonyms, homographs	In relation to pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar skills.
Dictation Exercises	Match:  sounds with letters sounds with words  listening comprehension	
Games	crossword puzzles card games matching sounds and letters with vocabulary. synonym, antonym, homonym and, homograph.	

Completion exercises, dictation exercises, and games are types of exercises that can be prepared and used by the

spelling teacher. All of them involve language skills--vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar--and are therefore effective devices to help the student master English spelling. Also, any of these exercises could be used to test the student's spelling ability.

In conclusion, English spelling can best be taught by involving many of the student's language skills. The pattern I suggest is:

1. Hear the word
2. See the word
3. Say the word
4. Write the word
5. Practice the word

As Fitzgerald mentions in The Teaching of Spelling:

Spelling cannot be taught properly solely as spelling, nor writing only as writing nor for that matter can reading or speaking or listening be taught in isolation, each from the other. All are taught best in relation to the others, each in its proper place . . . (14:179).

## CHAPTER III

### SPELLING ENGLISH INFLECTIONS

English inflectional endings are one of the main spelling problems among Thai students because the Thai language does not have inflections. Thai students tend to write English nouns and verbs in base form, disregarding any inflectional endings, even though they are taught about the rules in class. They tend to write "She cook four eggs" when they mean "She cooks four eggs" or "She cooked four eggs". These are typical spelling problems for them.

For the Thai student, mastering English inflection is like mastering any new habit, while the old habits are still deeply ingrained. It will take much time, so the spelling teacher should accept that she cannot completely train her student to spell inflectional endings automatically. She cannot eliminate all of the errors, but she can reduce them more or less, by providing systematic habits of study as well as effective exercises.

The most common spelling problem in this area is the omission of endings for the base form. The teacher should prepare her lesson plan so as to provide the students much opportunity to practice writing English with the proper inflectional endings.



The following are the main generalizations concerning English inflections and the spelling problems created by them among Thai students. These generalizations will be discussed in more detail in units 1 and 2 of this chapter, pages 38 through 51.

I. Regular forms of inflectional endings

- A. Noun inflections of plural forms: -s or -es endings. Thai students will usually write the base form of the word without its inflection: "I bought two shirt" instead of "I bought two shirts."
- B. Verb inflections: -s, -es, -ed, -ing. Thai students tend to ignore this type of inflection when they write or pronounce English.

II. Irregular forms of inflection

- A. Noun inflections: Just as English spelling is inconsistent in general, so is the formation of English plurals. Modern English contains some older plural forms as well as some foreign forms, primarily Latin. For example, the plural of goose is geese; of man, men; of ox, oxen; of child, children; of radius, radii. These irregular plurals will be discussed in detail on pages 44 through 45. In general, Thai students tend to disregard such irregular

plural forms and if they remember the plural inflections at all, they tend to write only the singular form with the regular -s ending, like man-mans, child-childs.

B. Verb inflections: Modern English verb inflections also contain some irregular older forms: dig-dug, eat-ate. Thai students tend to write only the base form dig and eat for every tense. See pages 47 through 49 for a more detailed discussion of verb inflections.

III. The inflectional ending for nouns, adjectives, adverbs and verbs ending in -y: butterfly-butterflies, happy-happier, happy-happily, cry-cries, and cry-cried. Thai students tend to ignore the rule that y has to be changed to i before adding an -es, -er, -ly, or -ed suffix, or they might disregard the inflection entirely (see pages 38 through 49 below).

IV. The inflection of nouns ending in -f or -fe: -f of -fe usually changes to v before adding es for plurals, such as life-lives or hoof-hooves. Thai students will easily forget to change f to v and add -es for plural forms--if they remember the plural inflection at all (see pages 42 through 43).

- V. Certain final consonants are doubled when verbs, nouns, and adjectives add inflections: sit-sitting, rub-rubbed-rubbing, big-bigger-biggest. Thai students tend to write those words without inflectional endings, or if they do it, they often forget to double the consonant before adding the inflection (see pages 50 through 51).
- VI. Final -e is dropped when adding -ed or -ing as in dance-danced-dancing. Thai students usually will add the ending without dropping the final -e.

Usually English inflections will not cause too much spelling problems when dictation exercises are conducted by a teacher who has correct pronunciation, because the student can hear the inflectional endings. But if the dictation is conducted by a teacher with poor pronunciation, her mispronunciation will certainly cause spelling mistakes. Again, the spelling teacher must be very careful with her English pronunciation. Concerning the inflectional endings, added syllables -es and -ed need to be pronounced correctly, especially during dictation exercises. The teacher of English spelling should master inflections herself and remember to help the student pronounce and write them correctly.

This chapter will provide two models of lesson plans for inflectional endings. Unit 1 is a detailed lesson plan of the single generalization "y is changed to i before adding

-es." Unit 2 is a general review lesson of all the English inflectional endings for nouns and verbs that Thai students should know by levels 4, 5, and 6. Both units are supposed to help the teacher of English spelling prepare her own spelling lesson plan. The exercises in the units can be enlarged or reduced according to the class situation. Spelling words in the lessons are from the vocabulary list of English: grades 5, 6, and 7.

## TEACHING SPELLING

Unit I: "Y" Ending Changed to i before adding es.

Previous Lesson

Review the pronunciation and the spelling of any similar old words. For instance:

cry	story
fly	party

New Words

Then apply the four steps of fixing the word: See, Hear, Say, Write. Give oral work with meaning for some difficult words:

try	city
study	country
carry	

Note: Y is pronounced /ay/ when the syllable with y is stressed: cry, fly.

Y is pronounced /I/ when the syllable with y is unstressed: party, city.

Generalization: Change -y to -i before adding es to form a singular verb, 3rd person, present tense and to form a plural noun, if the -y is preceded by a consonant. If the word has a vowel before -y, add s without changing -y to -i: day-days, play-plays.

1	2	1	2
cry	cries	city	cities
fly	_____	party	_____

The teacher should have the students write all the four columns for practice in the form of 1 - 2, 1 - 2 and should have them pronounce the words in both forms.

Practice: The advanced student may not need to do this exercise but the teacher can present it in a chart as a conclusion. For the less advanced student, both exercises and chart should be presented, oral or written or both.

I try  
They cry  
We study

He tries  
She cries  
He studies

One city  
One country  
One party

Two cities  
Two countries  
Two parties

Exercises in Context: A clue might be given in many ways: (1) The whole verb (base form) for slow students. (2) Only the first letter with blanks indicating the remaining letters for average students. (3) Only the context, with blanks for above average students.

A. Fill in the blank with the proper form for the verb given.

(cry)	Suda _____ when she cannot do her	_____
	homework.	
(carry)	We _____ chairs. She _____ books.	_____
(play)	The girl _____ pingpong. The boy _____	_____
	ball.	
(study)	We study in the library. She _____ here.	_____
(try)	He _____ to read English.	_____

b. Fill in the blank with the proper form for the noun given.

(day)	A week has seven _____.	_____
(story)	Our building has three _____.	_____
(monkey)	We can see _____ in the zoo.	_____
(boy)	There are ten _____ and five _____ in	_____
(girl)	the class.	_____
(city)	New York and Bangkok are _____.	_____
(country)	France and Italy are _____,	_____
(city)	while Paris and Rome are _____.	_____

Dictation Exercises. Dictation exercises can be prepared two ways. For the average students, a copy of the sentences to be dictated is given to the student with the words he is to be drilled on indicated with blanks. The teacher dictates the whole sentence, but the student just writes the words that occur in the blank spots of his context copy. For the above average student the whole passage is dictated and written.

1. I will \_\_\_\_\_ later, but he \_\_\_\_\_ now.
2. Our \_\_\_\_\_ is the largest of all the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The baby \_\_\_\_\_ when his brother \_\_\_\_\_ him.
4. See how the fat hen \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ like bananas.

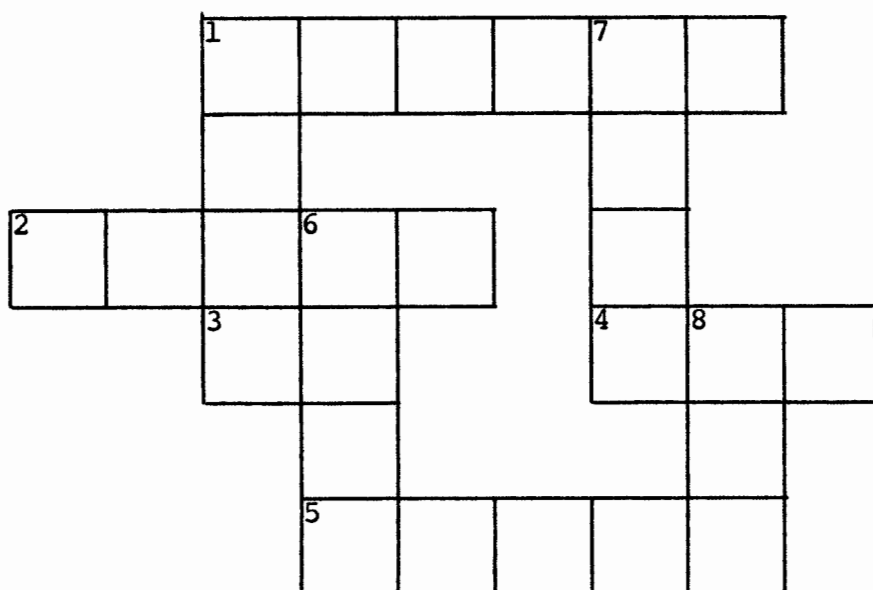
(Key: 1. study, studies    2. city, cities  
3. cries, carries    4. tries, fly  
5. monkeys)

A crossword is useful and enjoyable as a review lesson. This is a very simple puzzle for average students.

Finish the puzzle with the idea below:

1. A bird f\_\_\_\_\_ in the air.
  2. A baby always c\_\_\_\_\_ when he is hungry.
  3. A child always p\_\_\_\_\_ when there is no work to do.
- (Key: 1. flies, 2. cries, 3. plays)

F				
C				
P				



### Across

1. Rome, Paris, London are \_\_\_\_\_.
2. On a person's birthday people eat cake and ice cream at his birthday \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Opposite of yes.
4. Students \_\_\_\_\_ "good morning" to the teacher every day.
5. A word that means the same as lives and rhymes with plays is \_\_\_\_\_.

### Down

1. A plant with yellow and sweet seeds.
6. Playthings
7. Hens lay \_\_\_\_\_.
8. Short word for answer in algebra.

(Key: <u>Across</u>	<u>Down</u>
1. cities	1. corn
2. party	6. toys
3. no	7. eggs
4. say	8. ans.
5. stays	



## Unit II: A General Review of English Inflection

The lesson is prepared for the Thai student at the level grades 5, 6 and 7. The review lesson is divided into three main parts: (1) noun inflection and its irregular forms; (2) verb inflections (present tense), ed inflections and irregular form; and (3) inflectional ending of verbs that are one syllable short vowel sound.

### Regular Noun Plural

Plural nouns are formed by adding -s to the singular noun: book-books. But words that end with y with a consonant in front of it, change the y to i and add -es: city-cities. Words that end with a -y that have a vowel in front of it, add -s like regular nouns: boy-boys. Words that end with -f or -fe, change -f or -fe to -v and add es: leaf-leaves, knife-knives. Words that end with -sh, -ch, -s, -ss, -z, and -x, and most words that end in -o, add -es: dish-dishes, match-matches, bus-buses, glass-glasses, buzz-buzzes, and box-boxes, and potato-potatoes.

The teacher has the student practice the following type of exercises for review:

Form plural nouns from the following:

book	_____	match	_____
dog	_____	dish	_____
city	_____	wish	_____
story	_____	witch	_____
glass	_____	box	_____

class	_____	mango	_____
bus	_____	box	_____
leaf	_____	knife	_____
boy	_____		

After the student practices writing the correct form of plural, the teacher should always have him pronounce and spell the new word with inflectional endings.

Complete the sentence with the word given:

- (dog) I have a \_\_\_\_\_. She has two \_\_\_\_\_.  
 (mango) She ate one \_\_\_\_\_. They ate three \_\_\_\_\_.  
 (box) They have one \_\_\_\_\_. We have four \_\_\_\_\_.  
 (glass) She broke a \_\_\_\_\_. He broke two \_\_\_\_\_.  
 (boy) There is one \_\_\_\_\_ in my class. There are five \_\_\_\_\_ in his class.

After the student finishes the exercises, the teacher should have him pronounce and spell orally the words he wrote in both singular and plural form.

Read the sentences below and complete the words in

the blanks:

### Test

- I drink two gl \_\_\_\_\_ of milk.
- She has three brō \_\_\_\_\_ and three sis \_\_\_\_\_.
- There are seven d \_\_\_\_\_ in a week, and 365 \_\_\_\_\_ in a year.
- They killed two rab \_\_\_\_\_ today.
- We bought di \_\_\_\_\_ and gl \_\_\_\_\_ from the store.
- I ate two e \_\_\_\_\_ and two or \_\_\_\_\_ today.
- L \_\_\_\_\_ are always green.
- How many ff \_\_\_\_\_ did you see in the field?
- London, Paris, New York, and Bangkok are c t \_\_\_\_\_.
- England, France, the United States and Thailand are c \_\_\_\_\_ t \_\_\_\_\_.

The teacher should check the spelling in the test himself after the student finishes it.

A crossword puzzle will be used as a review lesson.

See the puzzle presented in Chapter II, page 29.

### Irregular Noun Plurals

At this level the student should also learn some of the irregular plural forms. The common ones are:

man - men	tooth - teeth
woman - women	foot - feet
child - children	goose - geese
mouse - mice	

Another small group of irregular plurals take the same form as the singular:

deer - deer
fish - fish
sheep - sheep

The teacher should have the student study and memorize these forms. Practice can be provided either by having the student match the singular and plural form with the pictures, complete the context, or work crossword puzzles. For instance:

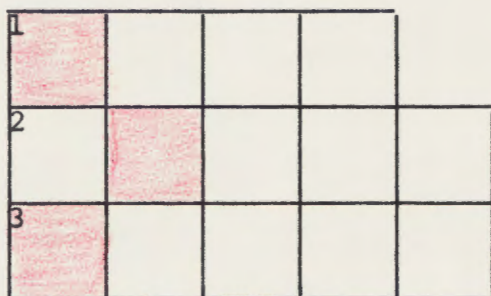
Write the plural form of the following:

one child	two _____
one goose	two _____
one woman	two _____
one foot	two _____
one sheep	two _____

The underlined word gives you the idea of the word in the blank. Complete the sentence:

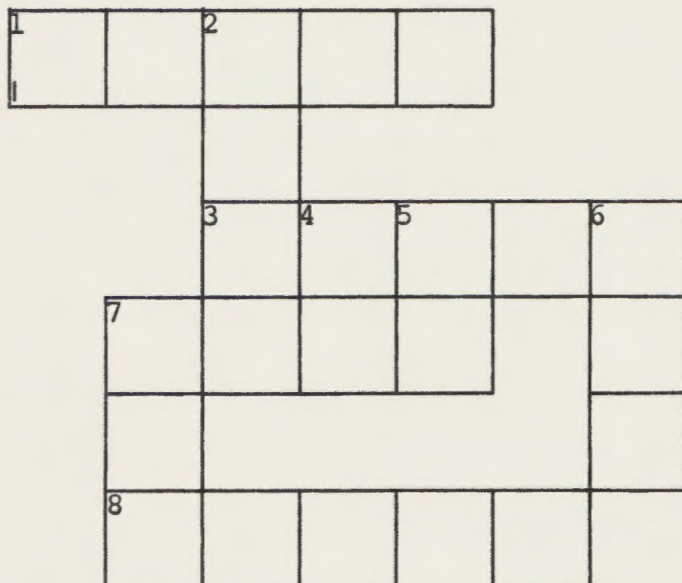
1. There are two \_\_\_\_\_ in the picture. One man is tall; the other is short.
2. In English, they say one child, but two \_\_\_\_\_.
3. According to the book, people have thirty-two \_\_\_\_\_. I had one tooth pulled out. So I have less than thirty-two.
4. There are twelve inches in a foot. Twenty-four inches make two \_\_\_\_\_.

Games: Finish the crossword puzzle with the following and find the word in the shaded squares.



1. The plural of foot.
2. The plural of tooth.
3. The plural of goose.

Another crossword puzzle to review the irregular group of plural nouns:



### Across

1. Mother, aunt, and grandmother are all \_\_\_\_\_.
3. A small boy or girl.
7. Parts of the body where you put your shoes on.
8. You chew with them.

### Down

2. Another word for rats.
4. The opposite of she.
5. A singular pronoun that refers to a thing.
6. House pet with four legs, bigger than a cat.
7. The opposite of thin.

(Key: Across--1. women 3. child 7. feet 8. teeth  
Down --2. mice 4. he 5. it 6. dog 7. fat)

### Present Tense, Singular Verbs

Even though we teach the regular plural ending first and then teach the exceptions, by the time for a general review it is easier and more economical to state the rules for exceptions first, and add the general rule last. (It is, after all, the exceptions that the students will be trying to remember.) The student can be given the rules for review lessons in this order as well.

Verbs: Singular, third person. A verb that ends in -o add -es: go-goes. A verb that ends in -s, -z, -ch, -sh, add -es: miss-misses, fizz-fizzes, match-matches, finish-finishes. A verb that ends in consonant -y, change the y to i and add es: cry-cries. When a verb ends with a -y that has a vowel in front of it, add -s as with a singular verb: play-plays. All other verbs just add -s.

The teacher can have the student practice spelling single words, concentrating on the singular verb, third person, present tense:

Form the word into the present tense of singular number and third person:

walk	_____
cook	_____
cry	_____
wash	_____
watch	_____
go	_____
play	_____

teach	_____
push	_____
study	_____
carry	_____
try	_____
miss	_____
enjoy	_____

Practice: Write the correct verb form of the following:

(teach)	I	_____	He	_____
(wash)	I	_____	He	_____
(study)	We	_____	She	_____
(watch)	They	_____	She	_____
(miss)	I	_____	He	_____
(go)	I	_____	He	_____

After the student writes the word correctly, the teacher should have the student spell the word he wrote and have the student pronounce the whole sentence. The teacher may also choose any sentence for the student instead of pronouncing all of every sentence.

Practice in context. This can be used as a practice exercise as well as a test.

- (cry) 1. A baby \_\_\_\_\_ when he is hungry.
- (teach) 2. She \_\_\_\_\_ English on Friday.
- (watch) 3. My brother \_\_\_\_\_ T.V. every night.
- (go) 4. She \_\_\_\_\_ shopping every Sunday.
- (wash) 5. She \_\_\_\_\_ her hands before she has dinner.

After the student finishes the exercise the teacher should have him pronounce the whole sentence and then spell the word in the blank or the teacher can correct the exercise herself.

### Past Tense Verbs

A verb ending with -y, change -y to -i and add -ed: try-tried. If a verb with -y ending has a vowel in front of it, add -ed after -y: play-played. A verb ending with -e, add only -d for the past tense. All other past tense verbs, just add -ed.

Form the verb into the past tense:

walk	<u>walked</u>	call	_____
cook	_____	try	_____
cry	_____	want	_____
push	_____	pass	_____
watch	_____	wait	_____
miss	_____	play	_____
love	_____	whistle	_____
play	_____	answer	_____

The teacher should have the student practice the pronunciation of the new word with -ed, which is pronounced either /t/, /d/, or /Id/.

Give the past tense form of the word:

(try)	I	_____	She	_____
(miss)	You	_____	He	_____
(play)	They	_____	She	_____
(wash)	We	_____	She	_____
(pass)	I	_____	She	_____

The teacher should have the student practice the pronunciation of the sentences and spell orally the word in the blank:

- |          |    |                                     |
|----------|----|-------------------------------------|
| (wait)   | 1. | I w_____ for you for a few minutes. |
| (answer) | 2. | She a_____ only two questions.      |
| (cook)   | 3. | My mother _____ fried rice for us.  |
| (wash)   | 4. | My brother and I _____ the dish.    |
| (enjoy)  | 5. | We _____ the party very much.       |

The teacher should have her students pronounce the whole sentence and spell orally the word in the blank.

Test Fill in the blank with the past tense verb correctly spelled:

- The bird fl\_ \_ away when we whistled to it.
- The baby cr\_ \_ \_ all night.
- Mother c\_ \_ \_ dinner every day.
- My sister w\_ \_ \_ \_ the dishes every weekend.
- I went to bed\_late\_ because I w\_ \_ \_ \_ T.V. last night.
- I c\_ \_ \_ \_ him but nobody ans\_ \_ \_ \_ the phone.

7. She tr\_\_\_\_ very hard and she p\_\_\_\_ the exam.
8. I w\_i\_\_\_\_ for five minutes before he came.
9. The train whis\_\_\_\_ very loud.
10. We enj\_\_\_\_ the show very much last night.

(Key: 1. flew, 2. cried, 3. cooked, 4. washed,  
5. watched, 6. called, answered, 7. tried, passed  
8. waited, 9. whistled, 10. enjoyed.)

Just as some nouns have irregular plural forms, like man-men, so too are some verbs irregular. The student at this level should learn the very common ones, certainly those that are in the vocabulary list at that level, such as:

drink - drank  
eat - ate  
sit - sat  
stand - stood  
write - wrote

The student should memorize the spelling in relation to meaning as well as to the base form. The association of base form, past tense form, and meaning will make it easier to memorize the spelling.

A review lesson for this group could be prepared in the form of completion exercises:

Complete the sentence with the underlined verb in a past tense form:

1. I drink orange juice every day.  
I \_\_\_\_\_ two glasses of orange juice yesterday.
2. We usually eat rice. Yesterday we \_\_\_\_\_ noodles.
3. I write to my mother once a week.  
I \_\_\_\_\_ twice last week.
4. I sit here every day.  
I \_\_\_\_\_ there yesterday.
5. Mr. Williams usually speaks Thai to me.  
Yesterday he \_\_\_\_\_ English to me.



If a one-syllable verb ends in a single consonant with a short vowel before it, double the final consonant before adding -ed: stop-stopped.

If a word ends with silent e, we usually add only -d after e, whether the vowel is long or short: live-lived, invite-invited.

Exercise: Add ed to the following verbs:

stop	_____	live	_____
drop	_____	like	_____
knit	_____	invite	_____
rub	_____	divide	_____
clap	_____	guide	_____
		dance	_____

The teacher should have the student pronounce the ed correctly: stopped /--t/, rubbed /--d/, knitted /--Id/.

More exercises (in context):

(live) They \_\_\_\_\_ in Paris before they came here.  
 (clap) We \_\_\_\_\_ our hands when she spelled correctly.  
 (invite) We \_\_\_\_\_ our teacher to the party.  
 (stop) Her watch \_\_\_\_\_.  
 (like) I \_\_\_\_\_ skating when I was a girl.

The teacher can use this completion drill for dictation exercise as well. She should have the student pronounce the whole sentence and spell only the word in the blank.

### Present Participles

If a one-syllable word ends in a single consonant with a short vowel before it, double the final consonant before adding -ing: cut-cutting, run-running.

If a word ends in silent -e, we usually drop the e before adding -ing, and we do not double the consonant:

bite-biting, drive-driving.

Add -ing to the following verbs:

run	_____
put	_____
cut	_____
rub	_____
save	_____
hide	_____
drive	_____
stop	_____
write	_____
dance	_____

The teacher should have the students pronounce and spell the word in the blank.

To form a continuous tense, a form of to be comes before the verb, and -ing is added to it: The ship is leaving. The boys are singing.

Practice:

(walk)	The girl is _____.
(read)	She is _____.
(run)	The pupils are _____.
(drive)	He is _____.
(write)	They are _____.

The teacher should have the students pronounce the whole sentence and spell the word in the blank.

The games mentioned in Chapter II can be used to give the students practice spelling all these English inflections.

## CHAPTER IV

### ENGLISH PHONICS

If a language uses one letter to represent one and only one sound--as u represents the same sound in but and hut--and if the language has one and only one sound for each letter, then that language is phonetic, and it is usually fairly easy to spell. English, like Thai, is only partially phonetic. In English the words pan, ran, and man are phonetically consistent, but the words sun and son are not, because different letters are used to spell the same sounds. Such inconsistencies cause Thai students difficulty in learning how to read and how to spell English.

For instance, in English the sound /f/ is usually spelled f, but it can also be spelled ph as in photograph or gh as in laugh. The vowel sound /I/ is usually spelled i as in pig, little, river, and six--but it can be spelled o as in women. The consonant sound /s/ is usually spelled she, but it can be spelled ti, as in nation. Thus, it would be possible for a student to assume that the word fish should be spelled ghoti: /f/ as in laugh, /I/ as in women, /s/ as in nation. But in spite of its phonetic inconsistencies, English is still phonetic enough to justify teaching phonics to students. Phonics is the study of the general rules that describe the relationship between sounds and letters in a language.

If the student can see a spelling feature of a word as part of a pattern or group, like the ee in feel, street, sweet, and green or the ea in beat, seat, read and mean, he can learn to spell more easily.

English has many vowel-letter combinations--such as ou, ea, oa--and consonant-letter combinations--such as sh, ch, th--that can represent a sound quite different from the individual sounds of the letters in the combination. For instance, that sound with the combination ch is different from c alone or h alone or even c plus h; it is a totally new sound. Such combinations do much to complicate English spelling. But the teacher need not teach the student all of those features at this level because his vocabulary is still very limited.

The word the student learns to spell should be the same as that that he learns for vocabulary. My investigation of the word lists in Thai-English texts for this level shows that most of the words are simple in regard to spelling. They are words in which a single sound is represented by a single letter, even though many of the words are more than one syllable long--banana, December, tricycle. However, there are enough words that contain vowel-letter combinations and consonant-letter combinations--like blouse, shout--that some of these combinations should be learned systematically so that the student can have less difficulty remembering their spelling.

According to the English texts at that level, other than simple words that spell single sounds with single letters--open, potato, coconut, hospital, rabbit--there are many words spelled with consonant-letter combination and vowel-letter combination. The most common consonant-letter combinations at this level are:

wh as in who, when, where  
th as in the, this, that, than, thank  
ch as in chair, kitchen, choose  
sh as in shall, shine, show  
ph as in photograph

The most common vowel-letter combinations are:

ee, ea as in feet, seat  
oo, ou as in book, foot, would, could  
ou as in house, blouse, out, shout  
ear as in ear, near, hear  
o, ow, oa as in gold, know, boat

The vowel combinations illustrate the one thing that perhaps makes English spelling most difficult: a single sound can be spelled in many different ways--and the same letters can represent more than one sound. However, in spite of these inconsistencies, there are patterns that are valuable enough for the teacher and the student to make use of them as aids to memorize English spelling. For example /i/ can be spelled in at least four different ways:

e as in be, he, she, we, me  
ee as in see, tree, free, street  
ea as in sea, seat, meat, speak  
y as in city, country, family

Each group has its own pattern, each one strong enough to offer a generalization that can aid the student. The teacher should

teach the student a general spelling pattern and have him hear, see, say, and practice the pattern rather than the individual words. The student should be given exercises that will fix the sound and the visual image of the pattern firmly in his mind. The teacher should plan the lesson so as to keep away from unnecessary complication of these patterns. She should try to make the job of learning simpler. And whenever she teaches a word to her class that does not fit the generalization, she should point out that it is an exception to the rule, and she should take special care to give her students special work with the word, especially getting them to see the word, getting its visual shape really fixed in their minds.

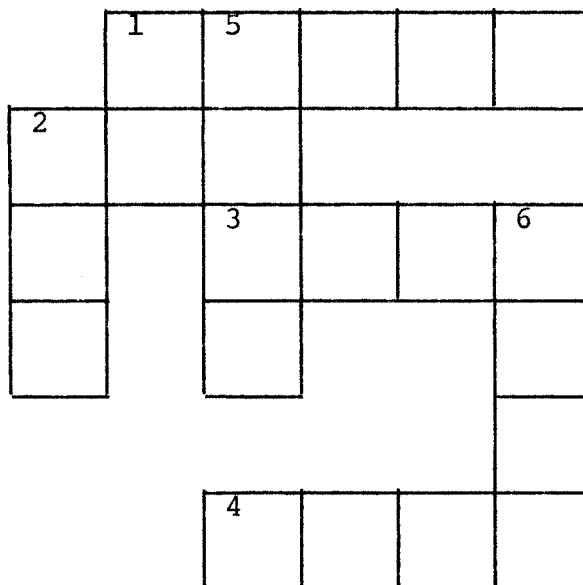
Words that sound exactly the same but spell differently are called homonyms: see-sea, know-no. The teacher should teach the student the meanings of the words and provide him with context sentences that will help him associate the different meanings with their different spellings. For instance:

Complete the sentence with the word given.

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| (see, sea)     | 1. Can you ____ the ____ from here?     |
| (be, bee)      | 2. She would like to ____ a ____.       |
| (to, too, two) | 3. I had to go ____ parties last night. |
| (their, there) | 4. ____ books are over ____.            |
| (hear, here)   | 5. I can't ____ you from ____.          |

The teacher can use such an exercise in the form of dictation tests as well.

For a review lesson of homonyms, a crossword puzzle can be given to the students:



### Across

1. A word that has the same sound as there.
2. A finger belongs to a hand. A \_\_\_\_ belongs to a foot.
3. We \_\_\_\_ books with our eyes.
4. We \_\_\_\_ with our ears.

### Down

1. A word in a sentence as "I go \_\_\_\_ school by bus."
2. A number between one and three.
5. The word that has the same sound as hear.
6. The word that has the same sound as deer.

Key Across: 1. their, 2. toe, 3. read, 4. hear  
Down: 1. to, 2. two, 5. here, 6. dear

Sounds that are pronounced differently but spelled the same are called homographs: now and low. The teacher should provide pronunciation and dictation practice that uses context sentences to help the student associate the sound, the letters, and the meanings. For instance, the following exercise gives

the student practice with both homonyms and homographs:

1. Now I know how she walks so slow.
2. Don't throw the mango over the boat.
3. He picked the tea leaves from the tree, I see.
4. He drove the laughing fat elephant through the forest.
5. Row, row, row your boat gently down the stream.
6. Look at the cow near the window.

The teacher of English spelling should know English sounds and their spelling in general although she does not need to teach them all to the student. The following is a list of the most common English spellings, arranged alphabetically from a to z. The first column gives the phonetic symbols for the sounds. The second column gives the most common letter spellings. The third gives key words--thus /æ/ is spelled with the letter a like in the word hat, fan, and can. It is handy as an aid for a teacher of reading and spelling to identify the sound and letter.



TABLE OF COMMON ENGLISH SPELLING<sup>1</sup>

Phonetic Symbols	Letters	Key Words
/ e/	a	hat, fan, can
/ey/, /ei/	ay, a_e <sup>2</sup> , ea	ray, ate, breakfast
/a/	a	father
/ɛ, → æ/	air, ear	chair, wear
/ə/	er, ir, or, ur	term, bird, word, turn
/b/	b	bed, boy, bench, rub
	ch	chair, chicken, kitchen
/d/	d	do, door, window
/i/	e, ea, ee, ey, ei, ie	he, see, team, key, receive, piece
	e	met, shell
/f/	f, gh, ph	fall, laugh, telephone, photograph
/g/	g, gg	give, egg, leg, pig

<sup>1</sup>The phonetic symbols in the first column are adopted from Dr. Bryce Van Syoc ระเบียบวิธีสอนภาษาอังกฤษตามหลักภาษาธรรมชาติ translated by ดร.เบญจมาศ งามเจริญกุล Searep, Usom Project, University of Michigan. The Social Science Association of Thailand Press, Bangkok, 1963. The letters and some of the key words in columns two and three are taken from "Table of Common English Spellings" in the Random House Dictionary of the English Language, College Edition (New York: Random House, 1968), xxxii. Some of the key words in column three are taken from the vocabulary word lists of grades 5, 6, and 7 in the seminar report of โรงเรียนการศึกษาค้นคว้าเพื่อพัฒนาระบบการเรียนการสอนภาษาไทย กรมวิชาการ กระทรวงศึกษาธิการ พ.ศ. 2511.

<sup>2</sup>a + consonant + e

Phonetic Symbols	Letters	Key Words
/h/	h, wh	hit, has, who, whom
/I/	i, u	if, is, busy
/ay/	i, ie, y	ice, tiger, tie, sky
/j/	j, ge	joy, jump, June, page
/k/	k, qu, ck, c	key, quick, back, car
/ks/	x	box, six
/l/	l, ll, le	live, call, mile
/m/	m, lm, (bm)	home, come, calm, (limb)
/n/	n, nn, ne, kn	not, runner, done, know
/ŋ/	nk, ng	pink, ring
/a/	o, a	top, tall
/ow/	o, oa, ow	no, note, boat, road, low
/ɔ/	au, aw, ou	caught, bought, horn, saw
/ɔɪ/	oi, oy	oil, boy, toy
/ʊ/	oo, ou	look, would
/u/	oo, ew	food, grew
/aʊ, əʊ/	ou, ow	out, shout, bow, now, house
/p/	p, pp	pen, stopping
/r/	r, rr	red, parrot
/s/	s, se, ss, c, ce	sit, class, city, rice
	sh, si, ti	ship, confusion, nation

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Phonetic Symbols	Letters	Key Words
/t/	t	talk, sit
/θ/	th	thin, think
/ð/	th	then, the, this
/ʌ/	u, o, oe	sun, son, cup, does
/v/	v, ve	visit, very, live
/w/	w, wh	well, when
/y/	y	yes, year
/yu/	ew	few
/z/	z, s	zone, has, zoo, zero, zebra, xylophone
/ʒ/	s, si, ge	measure, division, garage

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English phonics itself is much more detailed than this short discussion suggests. It is practical to teach all of its detail to the native speakers of English, but a foreign student should be taught only some of the phonic generalizations. The more complicated generalizations should be kept away from him, for they might do him more harm than good.

## CHAPTER V

### SOUND SUBSTITUTIONS

Correct pronunciation plays an important part in teaching students to spell, for spelling always involves matching sounds with letters. If children hear words inaccurately pronounced, they will tend to spell them incorrectly, too. When the word row is carelessly pronounced /low/, it may be confused with the word low, which can cause spelling problems. Children spell what they hear and pronounce. They spell walkin for walking because they hear and pronounce it that way (17:80). Therefore pronunciation is very important in spelling.

As we said in Chapter I, Thai students learn English as a foreign language. They can pronounce correctly those English sounds that are the same as their own, but they have difficulty mastering any English sounds that do not exist in their native sound-system. They will substitute the closest sounds in Thai for those English sounds that do not appear in Thai. As a result, some substituted sounds interfere with spelling as well as with listening comprehension, because the sound substitutes form words that coincidentally have their own meaning different from those of the intended words. For instance, if /s/ is substituted for /θ/, then /θɪŋ/ becomes /sɪŋ/, and the word that should be spelled thing is actually misspelled as sing.

The teacher of spelling needs to be aware of such problems and should try to avoid them. Although mastering all the correct pronunciations is impossible at the beginning, inaccurate pronunciation can at least be reduced.

Thai teachers of spelling should know all of the problem sounds for the Thai student. They should know those sound-substitutions that can interfere with communication, and proper spelling, so that they can prepare an effective lesson that can reduce undesirable sound substitutions. Following is a discussion of the most common sound substitutions that can cause spelling problems.

#### Consonant Sounds in Final Position

In Thai, consonant sounds in final position are never released. Thus, Thai students will have trouble distinguishing among words that differ only in their final consonant, as lock, log. But this creates spelling problems only--or mainly --when the two words are minimal pairs that differ only in that the final consonant of one is voiced while the final consonant of the other is not. For instance, as Miss Kruatrachue Foongfuang points out in her dissertation, Thai and English: Comparative Studies of Phonology for Pedagogical Application, "Thai learners of English fail to distinguish voiceless and voiced final stops as in the minimal pairs: cup) (cub, rack) (rag (29)." Cup and cub are minimal pairs that differ only

in that the final consonant of one is voiceless /p/, while the final consonant of the other is voiced /b/. The two sounds /p/ and /b/ are alike otherwise: bilabial stops. Other common final minimal pairs of this type would be

Final stops:	cap/cab	bat/bad	back/bag
	tap/tab	got/God	dock/dog
	rip/rib	seat/seed	lock/log
		kit/kid	

Final fricatives:	leaf/leave	ice/eyes	wish/which
	safe/save	race/raise	wash/watch
	life/live	rice/rise	wash/match
			dish/ditch

Fricatives also cause a different kind of problem for the Thai student. For English has nine fricatives /f, v, θ, ð, s, z, ʃ, ʒ, h/ that occur in initial and final positions, but Thai has only three /f, s, h/ and they occur in initial position only (29). This difference between English and Thai leads to a number of sound-substitutions that can cause spelling problems. Since the Thai student is not used to fricatives in the final position, he will tend to substitute for a final English fricative either no sound at all or an analogous stop. Their rice will be pronounced either like rye or right, or ride, since /t/ and /d/ are a minimal pair of the type discussed earlier. Thus, in final position

/s/ or /z/ will become /t/ or /d/ or no sound at all;  
 /f/ or /v/ will become /p/ or /b/ or no sound at all;  
 /θ/ or /ð/ will become /t/ or /d/ or no sound at all;  
 /s/, /c/, or /z/ will become /ʃ/<sup>1</sup> or no sound at all.

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<sup>1</sup> Thai has ʃ sound similar to /s/ and /c/ but not the same as both.

For instance:

piece (or peace) will be pronounced rather like Pete  
                   or pea  
leaf will be pronounced rather like leap  
calve will be calf or cab  
rove will be robe  
with will be wit  
breadth will be bread  
bath will be bat or bad  
dish will be ditch  
wish will be witch

A somewhat similar type of sound-substitution occurs with certain consonants in initial position:

/z/ will become /s/  
 /v/ will become /w/  
 /θ/ will become /s/, /t/  
 /ð/ will become /d/  
 /ʃ, ʧ, ʒ/ will become /č/ or /ʃ/

For instance:

zoo becomes sue  
vine becomes wine  
think becomes sink, tink  
then becomes den  
share becomes chair

Final /ks/ for the letter x does not occur in Thai, so Thai speakers will commonly replace /ks/ with /k/. Thus they will pronounce the word tax like tack or six like sick.

### English and Thai Nasals

Thai nasals /m, n, ŋ/ are similar to those of English. There will be no nasal consonant problems except when final /m/ and /n/ occur after vowel sequences /ay/, /aw/, /oy/. Thai students may not be able to hear and pronounce the nasal closure because Thai does not have it in final position (29).

Thus:

time becomes tie  
mine becomes my  
noun becomes now  
join becomes joy

### The Sounds /l/ and /r/

The sounds /l/ and /r/ do exist in Thai but they can create spelling problems because the Thai speaker always tends to pronounce /l/ for /r/. Thus Thai students often say:

led when they mean red  
law when they mean raw

They also tend to omit l and r in consonant blends. They pronounce

pain when they mean plain  
die when they mean dry.

They replace /l/ for /r/ in initial position and will also substitute /n/ for /l/ in final position. They pronounce skin when they mean skill and tin when they mean till.

### English Consonant Clusters

English consonant clusters, especially in final position, cause Thai students difficulties in pronunciation because Thai has only some of the clusters that occur in English and Thai has them only in initial position while English has them in initial and final positions. The final clusters will likely cause more difficulties than the initial



ones. Another difficulty is that Thai does not cluster more than two consonants at the same place, while English clusters more than two, as in fists. A Thai speaker will tend to omit the last consonant in the clusters, and that can cause problems in spelling.

The most common problems with clusters among Thai students are the final stops:

#### Two-consonant clusters.

<u>ps</u>	<u>stops</u> becomes <u>stop</u>
<u>ts</u>	<u>baskets</u> becomes <u>basket</u>
<u>ks</u>	<u>picks</u> becomes <u>pick</u>
<u>bs</u>	<u>clubs</u> becomes <u>club</u>
<u>ds</u>	<u>beds</u> becomes <u>bed</u>
<u>gs</u>	<u>eggs</u> becomes <u>egg</u>
<u>ths</u>	<u>baths</u> becomes <u>bath</u>
<u>ves</u>	<u>leaves</u> becomes <u>leave</u>

#### Three-consonant clusters.

<u>mps</u>	<u>lamps</u> becomes <u>lamp</u>
<u>sts</u>	<u>feasts</u> becomes <u>feast</u>
<u>sks</u>	<u>asks</u> becomes <u>ask</u>

However, if the teacher is careful to point out those clusters to the student and gives him enough practice pronouncing them, he can master them.

#### English Vowels

Although English vowels do not cause so much trouble to Thai students as do the consonant sounds, the English /ey/ does cause some difficulty. Thai does not have /ey/ but it does have /e/. The Thai speaker will substitute /e/ for /ey/,

thus producing led in place of laid, fell in place of fail, and tell in place of tail. When both words have their own meanings, this sound substitution will cause spelling problems. The teacher needs to be aware of this problem and try to reduce it by teaching the student that /ey/ is made from /e/ and /i/ or /y/ put together.

### Conclusion

Sound substitution involves pronunciation and meaning. The Thai teacher should prepare herself to master the English sounds as thoroughly as she can before her class begins. She must try to make her English pronunciation as accurate as that of a native speaker. Such preparation is not really impossible, but it does require much time to practice.

If the teacher of spelling cannot avoid making undesirable sound-substitutions, she should take special care to minimize the difficulties she might cause her students. This does not mean that the class should have no oral practice--Step 1, "Hear the Word" and Step 3, "Say the Word" are still necessary and must be carefully presented. It is just that the teacher should minimize the extent to which she exposes her students to any mispronunciations that she is unable to overcome. For example, she should try to avoid dictation exercises and have the student practice his

spelling in other forms of exercise, such as exercises with context sentences, completion type or games that need written spelling more than oral spelling.

If the student has problems with undesirable sound-substitutions, the teacher should explain to him how it interferes with communication and can cause confusion in spelling. The teacher should have him practice exercises involving pairs of words that differ only in the sound that is causing the substitutions problem--for instance, sing-thing, lock-log, and also have him conscious of their differences in meaning. The exercise can be in the form of pronunciation practice, dictation exercises, completion exercises, or sounds of words matching with pictures. The following are types of such an exercise.

Dictation exercises. Fill in the blank with the words pronounced by the teacher:

1. I left my \_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_.
2. Put the \_\_\_\_ on your \_\_\_\_.
3. Who \_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_ on the shelf?
4. That \_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_.
5. The \_\_\_\_ grapes grow on a \_\_\_\_.
6. He wears a \_\_\_\_ five shoe on one \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_ six on the other.

Key:

1. cap, cab
2. bag, back
3. stole, stone
4. bat, bad
5. wine, vine
6. size, side, size

Pick-a-card game can be prepared as a review exercise for the problem sounds that can cause confusion in spelling. The teacher prepares the card with words from minimal pairs such as bed or bet. The teacher has the student pick a card without seeing the word on the card. The teacher pronounces the

word on the card accurately for the student to spell. The side with the most cards correctly spelled wins the game.

Matching the picture with the word is another type of exercise suitable for a review exercise to check whether the student can spell correctly the word that might cause undesirable sound-substitutions.

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51. หลักสัทวิทยาตามหลักภาษาศาสตร์ พงศศักดิ์ราช 2503 กระทรวงศึกษาธิการ โรงพิมพ์การศาสนา วัดพระแก้ว พระนคร พ.ศ. 2511 17

52. หลักสูตรพระสมณสิกขาตอหมฺลาล พุทธศักราช ๒๕๐๓  
 กษัตริย์วงษ์สิกขาธิกร โรงพิมพ์ดุสิตภ พระสุเมรุ  
 พระนคร พ.ศ. ๒๕๑๑

## APPENDIX

### MODEL OF HANDWRITING

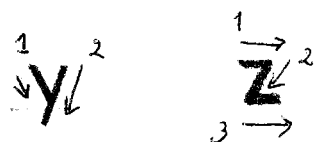
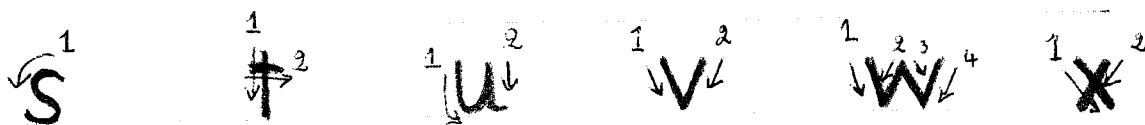
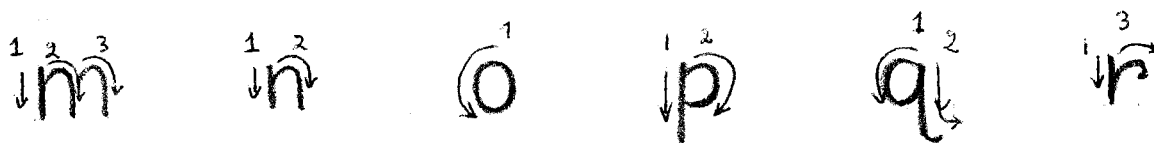
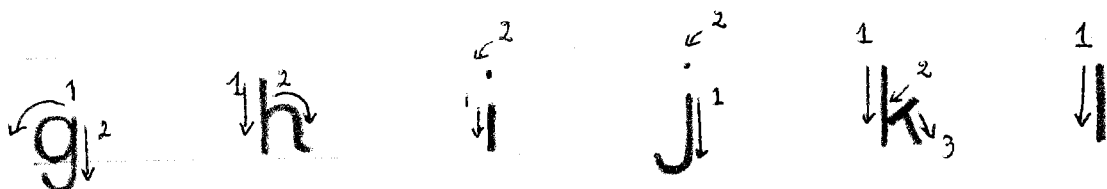
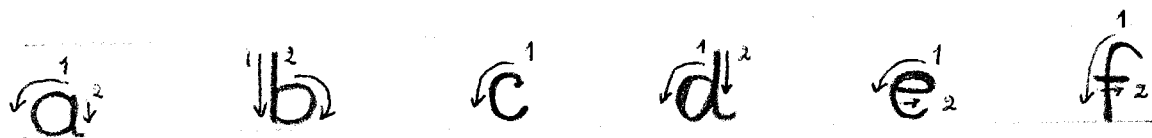
The following are models of handwriting in both cursive and manuscript forms, adapted from Basic Goal in Spelling 3 by Kottmeyer and Ware.

## MANUSCRIPT FORM

## CAPITAL LETTERS



MANUSCRIPT FORM  
LOWER CASE LETTERS



## CURSIVE FORM

## LOWER CASE LETTERS

a

b

c

d

e

f

g

h

i<sup>1,2</sup>j<sup>1,2</sup>

k

l

m

n

o

p

q

r

s

t

u

v

w

x<sup>1,2</sup>

y

z

## CURSIVE FORM

## CAPITAL LETTERS

A B C D

E F G H

I J K L

M N O P

Q R S T

U V W X

Y Z